

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2471

INFO AMCONSUL JERUSALEM PRIORITY

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 3 TEL AVIV 4748

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AMGT PFOR IS

SUBJ: U S GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

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1. THE OBJECTIVES

AS APPROVED BY THE DEPARTMENT, THE OBJECTIVES OF US
POLICY TOWARD ISRAEL ARE:

I. RESOLUTION OF THE DISPUTE WITH THE ARABS.

II. SHAPING OF THE SIZE AND COMPOSITION OF OUR
ECONOMIC AND MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO ISRAEL
SO THAT IT SUPPORTS OUR BILATERAL AND REGIONAL
INTEREST.

III. WIDER ACCEPTANCE OF ISRAEL IN THE INTERNATIONAL
COMMUNITY.

IV. ESTABLISHMENT OF INTERNATIONAL CONTROLS OF
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ISRAELI NUCLEAR CAPABILITIES.

V. IMPROVED ISRAELI HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES.

VI. INCREASED ISRAELI AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING
OF THE US.

VII. BETTER CONSULAR SERVICES FOR AMERICANS AND ISRAELIS.

2. THE ISSUE

THE OVERRIDING US POLICY ISSUE WHICH WILL AFFECT THE ACHIEVEMENT OF ALL THE OBJECTIVES IS HOW TO ACHIEVE AND RETAIN FULL ISRAELI COOPERATION IN REACHING A MIDDLE EASTERN PEACE SETTLEMENT. WITHOUT PEACE, OR RECOGNIZABLE PROGRESS TOWARDS IT, FEW OF OUR OBJECTIVES WILL BE WITHIN REACH. HOWEVER, IF THE GOI WERE ASKED TO DEFINE WHAT IT SEES AS THE BASIC ISSUE IN ITS RELATIONS WITH THE US, IT WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY REPLY: "CAN THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE US, ON WHICH ISRAEL DEPENDS FOR MILITARY, POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SECURITY, BE SUSTAINED?" IT IS THIS UNDERSTANDABLE DIFFERENCE IN PERCEPTION WHICH WILL MAKE OUR TASK SO DIFFICULT.

3. THE PRESENT SITUATION

THIS MISSION IS CURRENTLY ENGAGED IN EFFORTS TO REACH EACH OF THE SEVEN OBJECTIVES.

A. NATURALLY, FIRST PRIORITY IS BEING GIVEN TO OBJECTIVE I. ALL SUBSTANTIVE SECTIONS OF THE EMBASSY TAKE PART IN:

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-- REPORTING AND ANALYZING ISRAELI ACTIONS AND ATTITUDES ON PEACE ISSUES;

-- CONVEYING TO ISRAELI LEADERS AND THE MEDIA THE SUBSTANCE AND RATIONALE OF US POLICIES AND INITIATIVES;

-- CONTRIBUTING, AS APPROPRIATE, TO US POLICY DECISIONS.

ALL PARTS OF THE EMBASSY ALSO DEVOTE AN ENORMOUS AMOUNT OF THEIR TIME TO SUPPORT FOR HIGH-LEVEL US VISITORS -- SUCH AS THE SECRETARY OF STATE, CODELS AND OTHER IMPORTANT US GROUPS AND LEADERS -- A LARGE PROPORTION OF WHOSE VISITS BEAR, OFTEN DIRECTLY, ON OBJECTIVE I.

B. THE ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL SECTION IS INVOLVED IN A CONTINUOUS EVALUATION OF THE ISRAELI ECONOMIC SITUATION SO THAT BETTER JUDGEMENTS CAN BE MADE ON THE LEVEL OF US ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE NEEDED BY THE GOI. THE DEFENSE ATTACHE'S OFFICE ALSO DOES FREQUENT ASSESSMENTS OF GOI MILITARY AID NEEDS.

C. THE POLITICAL AND CONSULAR SECTIONS HAVE ENGAGED ISRAELI AUTHORITIES IN AN EXTENSIVE DIALOGUE ON LOCAL HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES. THIS EXTENDS FROM THE NORMAL PROTECTION GIVEN TO US CITIZENS WHO HAVE RUN AFOUL OF ISRAELI LAW TO THE TREATMENT OF NON-AMERICANS BEING HELD FOR ALLEGED TERRORIST ACTIVITIES. THE ISRAELIS ARE NOW WELL SENSITIZED TO OUR CONCERN.

D. USIS, THROUGH DISSEMINATION OF MATERIAL, DISCUSSIONS WITH INFLUENTIAL ISRAELIS AND SPONSORSHIP OF VISITING US EXPERTS, PROVIDES BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON US POLICIES AND THE US POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CONTEXT IN WHICH THEY DEVELOP AND CHANGE.

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E. THERE IS NOT VERY MUCH THE EMBASSY CAN DO TO IMPROVE ISRAEL'S INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS. WE DO, HOWEVER, GIVE SOME ADVICE TO THE GOI ABOUT THE IMPACT THAT ITS ACTIONS IN CERTAIN SENSITIVE AREAS WILL HAVE ON WORLD OPINION. THE ADVICE IS RECEIVED MORE OR LESS POLITELY, BUT ONLY OCCASIONALLY FOLLOWED. ONE RECENT EXAMPLE IS THE ISRAELI-SOUTH AFRICAN CONNECTION. MOST OF THE OTHER ACTIONS IN THIS AREA FALL TO US DELEGATIONS TO INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS. WHERE APPROPRIATE, THE EMBASSY OFFERS SUGGESTIONS TO THE DEPARTMENT AND USDELS ON HOW THESE ISRAELI-RELATED PROBLEMS CAN BE BEST HANDLED AND SUPPORTS USDELS EFFORTS WITH DEMARCHES TO THE GOI.

F. THE KEY ELEMENT IN OUR ATTEMPT TO GAIN ISRAELI ACCEPTANCE OF NUCLEAR SAFEGUARDS AND SUPPORT FOR US NON-PROLIFERATION POLICY IS THE GOI'S DESIRE TO GET NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS. THE GOI KNOWS THAT RECENT US LEGISLATION WILL REQUIRE IT TO PLACE ALL NUCLEAR ACTIVITIES UNDER SAFEGUARDS IF IT IS TO BUY THE POWER REACTORS. IT IS UNLIKELY THAT ISRAEL WILL BE WILLING TO DO SO. THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS WILL REMAIN OPEN TO THEM:

-- SEEK A WAIVER FROM THE US TO THE SAFE-

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2472

INFO AMCONSUL JERUSALEM PRIORITY

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GUARD PROVISION OF THE LAW;

-- DROP THE NUCLEAR PROGRAM AND RELY ON COAL AND
PETROLEUM THERMOPOWER PLANTS FOR FUTURE ENERGY NEEDS;

-- SEEK EQUIPMENT AND ASSISTANCE FROM A THIRD COUNTRY
SUPPLIER.

G. OUR CONSULAR SERVICES TO AMERICANS AND ISRAELIS
DO NOT MEET THE STANDARDS WHICH WE WANT AND THEY HAVE A
RIGHT TO EXPECT. THE PROBLEM IS SIMPLY ONE OF GETTING
ENOUGH QUALIFIED US CONSULAR SERVICE OFFICERS ON THE
SCENE TO DO THE JOB. OUR REQUESTS TO THE DEPARTMENT
ARE A MATTER OF RECORD. WE NOW ARE AWAITING FOR OUR
REQUESTS (MANY OF WHICH HAVE BEEN APPROVED IN PRINCIPLE)
TO BE CARRIED OUT.

4. PROJECTED DEVELOPMENTS

BECAUSE OF US-ISRAELI DIFFERENCES OVER THE PEACE PRO-
CESS, WE HAVE ENTERED A DIFFICULT PERIOD IN TERMS OF
EACH SIDE'S UNDERSTANDING AND APPRECIATION OF THE OTHER.

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EMOTIONAL HIGHS AND LOWS ARE A NORMAL PART OF THE LOCAL
POLITICAL LANDSCAPE BECAUSE, AS MENTIONED IN PARA 2,
THIS IS A SINGLE ISSUE COUNTRY. ISRAELI SENSITIVITY
OVER THE POSSIBILITY OF LOSING US ECONOMIC, MILITARY
AND DIPLOMATIC SUPPORT FOR ITS SECURITY IS WELL ESTAB-
LISHED. EVERYTHING ELSE IS JUDGED BY THAT CRITERION.

5. ASSUMPTIONS

THE TWO CRUCIAL ASSUMPTIONS CONCERNING US-ISRAELI

RELATIONS OVER THE NEXT TWO YEARS ARE THE SUCCESS OR FAILURE OF THE PEACE PROCESS AND THE FATE OF THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT. OBVIOUSLY, THE TWO ASSUMPTIONS ARE NOT UNCONNECTED.

A. IF THERE IS STEADY PROGRESS IN THE NEGOTIATIONS WHICH RESULTS IN A COMPREHENSIVE PEACE SETTLEMENT, OR EVEN A PARTIAL SETTLEMENT WHICH INCLUDES EGYPT AND/OR JORDAN, JOY WILL REIGN SUPREME HERE AND US STOCK WILL BE VERY HIGH. SHOULD THE PEACE PROCESS GRIND SLOWLY TO A HALT OR EXPLODE, US-ISRAELI RELATIONS WILL BE PLACED UNDER A SEVERE STRAIN. MUCH WILL DEPEND, OF COURSE, ON WHO IS PERCEIVED TO BE THE VILLAIN OF THE PIECE. WHATEVER THE FACTS, THE GOI WILL TRY TO CONVINCE THE PUBLIC THAT IT WAS BLAMELESS AND THAT US POLICY WAS A MAJOR DETERMINANT IN ARAB INFLEXIBILITY. THEY ARE LIKELY TO HAVE SUBSTANTIAL SUCCESS IN DOING SO, AND WE WILL HAVE TO USE EVERY PUBLIC AFFAIRS DEVICE AVAILABLE TO TRY TO MITIGATE THE EFFECT.

B. THE ABILITY OF THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT TO RETAIN POWER SHOULD THE PEACE INITIATIVE FALTER WILL DEPEND VERY MUCH ON HOW THE FAILURE OCCURS. IN A CRISIS

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ATMOSPHERE, THE ISRAELI PUBLIC WILL RALLY AROUND THE GOVERNMENT IN POWER - AT LEAST IN THE SHORT RUN. A MORE GRADUAL DECLINE IN THE PROSPECTS FOR PEACE WOULD LEAVE THE GOVERNMENT MUCH MORE VULNERABLE.

C. FOR THE PRESENT, WE ARE ASSUMING THE PEACE PROCESS WILL CONTINUE, ALBEIT IN FITS AND STARTS, AND THAT THE MAKEUP OF THE GOVERNMENT WILL REMAIN BASICALLY UNCHANGED, ALTHOUGH THERE COULD BE NEW FACES IN THE CABINET. THE ONLY ABSOLUTE IN ISRAELI POLITICAL LIFE TODAY IS THAT NO ONE IS CONFIDENTLY PREDICTING WHAT IS GOING TO HAPPEN IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS. BEGIN IS CERTAINLY UNDER GREATER PRESSURE TODAY THAN HE WAS A FEW MONTHS AGO. THE EFFECT OF A CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT, SHOULD IT OCCUR (AND IT IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY AT THIS WRITING), WOULD DEPEND ON WHO TOOK POWER AND UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES. THIS COULD ONLY BE ASSESSED IF AND WHEN IT HAPPENED. ONE CERTAINTY WOULD REMAIN: ANY SUCCESSOR GOVERNMENT WOULD ALSO BE A HARD BARGAINER ON PEACE AND SECURITY MATTERS.

D. THE LEAST EXPENSIVE SHORT-TERM SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST FOR THE US TAXPAYER IS A CONTINUATION OF THE STATUS QUO. PEACE WOULD PROBABLY REQUIRE LARGER US AID LEVELS AND WAR WOULD INVOLVE ALMOST UNTHINKABLE ECONOMIC LOSSES TO ALL THE WESTERN DEMOCRACIES. THE PRO-

BLEM IS THAT THE STATUS QUO PROBABLY IS NOT SUSTAINABLE,
AND LACK OF PROGRESS TOWARDS PEACE WILL LEAD TO THE
STAGGERING ECONOMIC AND HUMAN COSTS OF CONTINUED CONFLICT.

6. COURSES OF ACTION

WE BELIEVE THAT THE COURSES OF ACTION WE PURSUE IN THE
FUTURE TO ACHIEVE OUR GOALS AND THE USE OF EMBASSY
RESOURCES TO THIS END WILL NOT BE GREATLY DIFFERENT
IN THE NEXT TWO YEARS THAN THEY ARE AT PRESENT; WE MUST
UNDERSTAND WHAT THE ISRAELIS ARE THINKING AND WHY AND
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REPORT THAT TO WASHINGTON; WE MUST TRY TO CONVINCE THEM
OF THE SOUNESS OF OUR VIEWS AND THE SINCERITY OF OUR
ACTIONS WHILE KEEPING THEIR TRUST ABOUT OUR COMMITMENT
TO THEIR SECURITY; WE MUST UNDERSTAND THEIR ECONOMY AND
THEIR MILITARY WELL ENOUGH TO DETECT ANY IMPORTANT CHANGES
AND TO TAILOR OUR POLICY TO REAL NEEDS; WE MUST TRY
TO ACHIEVE THE ABOVE WITH A COMBINATION OF FRANKNESS AND
PROFESSIONALISM IN A WORD, WE NEED TO EMPLOY ALL THE
TOOLS OF TRADITIONAL AND MODERN DIPLOMACY.

A. WHENEVER THERE IS A DIFFERENCE OF OPINION BETWEEN
ISRAEL AND THE US, ISRAELI POLITICAL OBSERVERS SEE IN
ANY US ACTION AN ATTEMPT TO "PRESSURE" ISRAEL. THE
IMMEDIATE LOCAL REACTION IS TO DIG IN AND TO MOBILIZE
PRO-ISRAELI SENTIMENT IN THE US TO OBTAIN A POLICY
MODIFICATION. THE TACTIC IS FREQUENTLY SUCCESSFUL AND
LIKELY TO CONTINUE TO BE USED. FOR THIS REASON, A FINER
TUNING OF OUR ECONOMIC AND MILITARY ASSISTANCE LEVELS TO
ISRAEL TO FIT BROADER US POLICY INTERESTS WILL ALMOST
CERTAINLY BE UNWELCOME TO THE GOI. THEY WILL FIGHT ANY

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VARIATIONS FROM THEIR AID REQUESTS MORE ON POLITICAL THAN ON SECURITY OR ECONOMIC GROUNDS. OUR POSITIONS MUST, IN THE FIRST INSTANCE, BE SOLIDLY GROUNDED ON THE TECHNICAL/FACTUAL SIDE. TO MAKE OUR POLICY STICK, THE EXECUTIVE MUST CONVINCE THE US PUBLIC AND CONGRESS OF ITS VALIDITY: WITH THE ISRAELIS, WE CAN DEFEND OUR ACTIONS BUT WILL HAVE A HARD TIME WINNING CONVERTS.

B. THE SOUTH LEBANON SITUATION CONTINUES AS THE MOST IMMEDIATE DANGER IN THE AREA FOR A RENEWAL OF GENERAL ARAB/ISRAELI MILITARY HOSTILITIES. WE BELIEVE THAT THE EMBASSY, AS PART OF AN OVERALL USG EFFORT, HAS PLAYED A USEFUL ROLE IN LIMITING THE LEVEL OF VIOLENCE THERE. BEFORE THE RECENT IDF ATTACK, THE ISRAELI POLITICAL LEADERSHIP ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS SEEMED READY TO INTERVENE IN CROSS-BORDER OPERATIONS ON THE BASIS OF FAULTY INFORMATION OR ANALYSIS. WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF VARIOUS ELEMENTS IN THE MISSION AND WITH THE CLOSE COOPERATION OF THE DEPARTMENT AND EMBASSY BEIRUT, WORST CASE SITUATIONS WERE AVOIDED. IN THE WAKE OF THE RECENT EVENTS IN SOUTH LEBANON, OUR OBJECTIVE HAS CHANGED TO TRYING TO HELP CONSTRUCT A POLITICAL-MILITARY SITUATION
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THERE WHICH WILL REMOVE ISRAELI TROOPS FROM LEBANON AND REMOVE THE ROOT CAUSE OF THE IDF ACTION - ATTACKS ON ISRAEL FROM THAT TERRITORY. TO THAT END, A MAJOR TASK FOR THE EMBASSY WILL BE TO CONVINCE THE GOI TO COOPERATE WITH THE UNIFIL AND TO ADOPT POLICIES IN SOUTH LEBANON WHICH ENCOURAGE, OR AT LEAST NOT IMPEDE, THE REESTABLISHMENT OF LEBANESE CONTROL OVER THE BORDER AREA. LEWIS

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